

Montana Department of Transportation



# Comment form

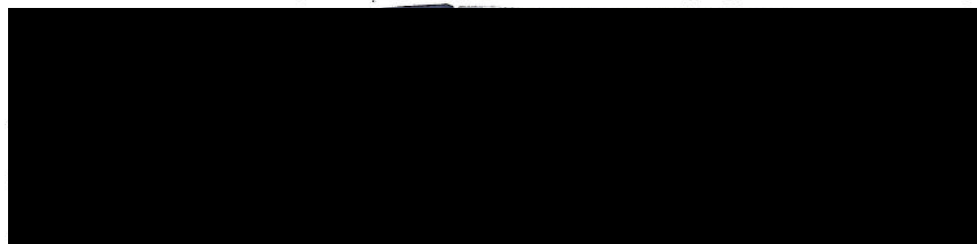
Safety Public Meetings

Meeting date and time: June 4, 2008; 6:30 - 9:00 pm

Location: BW White Oak Grand Hotel, Kalispell, MT

You are invited to make your comments on this form and leave it with the meeting officials or take it with you and mail it to Dwane Kailey, Missoula District Administrator, MDT Missoula district office, at PO Box 7039, Missoula, MT 59807-7039.. Comments may also be submitted by fax to (406) 494-4396 or online at [www.mdt.mt.gov/mdt/comment\\_form.shtml](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/mdt/comment_form.shtml).

Please indicate your name, address and affiliation (if any) below. Thank you for your interest in and comments about this project. Please use the back and/or additional sheets of paper if necessary.



Comments: (10) The people on 35 east shore of Flathead Lake need to pay more for good services. They forget transportation is need now and into the future for an aspect of everyday. The people on yellow bay to finley point need to be alert in cars & light pickups & RV on comfort zone of all traffic on 35 East shore of the Flathead Lake



# Comment form

Safety Public Meetings

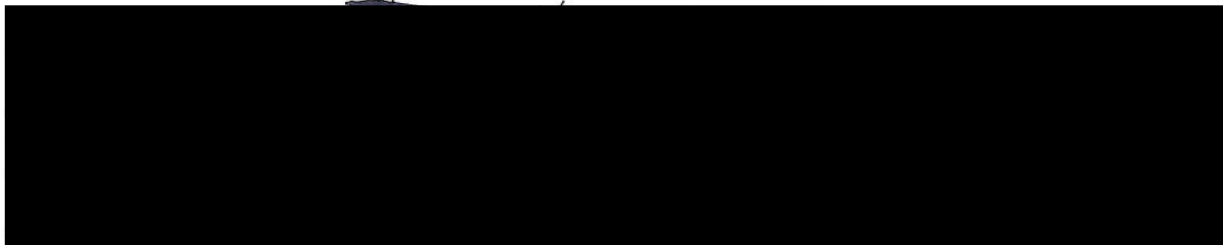
Meeting date and time: June 5, 2008; 6:30 - 9:00 pm

Location: BW Kwataqnuq Resort, Polson, MT

You are invited to make your comments on this form and leave it with the meeting officials or take it with you and mail it to Dwane Kailey, Missoula District Administrator, MDT Missoula district office, at PO Box 7039, Missoula, MT 59807-7039.. Comments may also be submitted by fax to (406) 494-4396 or online at

[www.mdt.mt.gov/mdt/comment\\_form.shtml](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/mdt/comment_form.shtml).

Please indicate your name, address and affiliation (if any) below. Thank you for your interest in and comments about this project. Please use the back and/or additional sheets of paper if necessary.



Comments: In regards to the discussion concerning Hwy 35: The A-trains with the long trailer pulling a short pup isn't very safe on the narrow road where it can get to whipping just a little bit - if the truck is too close to edge of highway it can create real trouble, especially the ones w/ the long torque. I have driven trucks for many years - have observed them & I wouldn't agree to pull that combination. I think it's too bad that MT doesn't have similar laws as Canada concerning B-trains, which are the safest combination trailers on the highway. In regards to noise: The signs concerning compression brakes having mufflers should pertain to motorcycles as well.



GTALK

June 25, 2008

Mr. Dwane Kailey  
District Administrator  
P.O. Box 7039  
Missoula, MT 59807-7039

RE: Safety issues on Hwy 35 between Bigfork and Polson

Dear Mr. Kailey,

I've lived for six years off Hwy 35, south of Bigfork, at mile mark [REDACTED] and I urge you to take action in mitigating the dangerous impact of truck traffic. There has been a tremendous increase in volume, size, and speed of trucks on this highway in the past two or three years, and it has become a frightening experience to travel by car. When we first moved into our home, my husband and I would ride our bikes in the ditches (as there is no shoulder) to town, but it would truly be a life-threatening experience now. We find it is not safe to even open our mailbox or newspaper box with the roar of trucks barreling by our road.

Clearly, this highway was never engineered to accommodate so many large trucks traveling at high rates of speed. They regularly cross over the center line; their back wheels are often riding on the narrow dirt shoulder, kicking up clouds of dust which impair the vision of a following car. And their speed, most of the time, far exceeds the limit, except for steep hills when they are forced to slow down to normal. Although I regularly travel at the speed limit, and put my turn signal on well ahead of time, and pump my brake lights, the close tail-gating by these trucks requires me to either pass my driveway, or be forced off the road to avoid being rear-ended. At my section of the highway, there is a brief broken line for passing, and I can't begin to tell you how many near head-on collisions I've been witness to as trucks speed by to pass a line of traffic.

The eastshore highway is a neighborhood road; have you done a count of how many driveways and roads enter this highway? It is our only access to work, school or town. And, while I'm certain you know the accident rate, you have no way of quantifying the number of near-misses or frightening experiences of being trailgated or run off the road that many of us have had to endure as we go to and from our homes.

There is such a clear alternative with Hwy 93 across the lake. It has wide shoulders, fewer driveway turns, and plentiful passing lanes. And, just as important, the distance from the lake is much greater and oil spills into the lake are not nearly as likely as the one we've just experienced on the east side. Most of us living on this side of the lake have various springs of water that spill down the hillside into the lake; we all know that a fuel spill anywhere along the highway could be a disaster for our homes and the lake. The

environmental risk to beautiful Flathead Lake is an enormous risk on the east side and must be considered as much as traffic safety issues.

At the very minimum, I would urge you to prohibit the hauling of hazardous materials on Hwy 35. Likewise, I would think that a restriction in truck size and weight would be a viable option, perhaps necessitating a weigh station for enforcement. And, of course, a lower truck speed limit is imperative. Highway cameras could be employed rather than adding highway patrol cars and staff.

I would think that because of it's scenic beauty as well as it's history of construction, Hwy 35 might be a good candidate for either a state or federal Scenic Highway designation, and, I would hope that might include a limit in speed and size of trucks?

During the summer months, the section of highway between Woods Bay and Bigfork is jammed with traffic of all kinds, pulling boats, trailers, etc. There is a blinking caution light near the Flathead Lake Lodge, and we are regularly required to stop for crossing horses. The new Saddlehorn development has increased construction traffic, and, soon, we will have residents of that community using this narrow, crowded highway. It is untenable to continue to have the volume of large trucks, barreling along Hwy 35, mixing with this residential traffic.

There are alternatives! Please do not allow the truck lobby to hold us hostage on this issue again and again. Safety of the residents and environmental protection of the lake must be of greater importance. Thank you so much for asking for feedback, and I will be watching closely for your decisions and implementation of change.

Sincerely,



Jun 09 08 10:21a

P. 1 STACKE

Montana Department of Transportation



# Comment form

Safety Public Meetings

Meeting date and time: June 5, 2008; 6:30 - 9:00 pm

Location: BW Kwataquuk Resort, Polson, MT

You are invited to make your comments on this form and leave it with the meeting officials or take it with you and mail it to Dwane Kailey, Missoula District Administrator, MDT Missoula district office, at PO Box 7039, Missoula, MT 59807-7039.. Comments may also be submitted by fax to (406) 494-4396 or online at

[www.mdt.mt.gov/mdt/comment\\_form.shtml](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/mdt/comment_form.shtml).

Please indicate your name, address and affiliation (if any) below. Thank you for your interest in and comments about this project. Please use the back and/or additional sheets of paper if necessary.



Comments:

Re: Highway 35, along the East shore of Flathead Lake. I am a homeowner on [REDACTED] for past 35 years, and regularly drive Highway 35, often north to Bigfork as well. There is a real and significant safety risk to driving this highway because of the number of extended-trailer semi trucks using this highway. I have often found these "pup" towing rigs crossing the center line when negotiating the sharp curves on this highway. I feel this is a legal liability issue to auto travelers, and that rigs towing "pup" units should be restricted from using this highway from Polson north at least to Bigfork.

Thank you.



Dwane Kailey  
District Administrator, MDT Missoula District Office  
PO Box 7039  
Missoula, Mt 59807-7039

My wife and I attended the session on truck traffic on highway 35 in Somers, Montana on June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2008. We have a home on Hwy 35 in Bigfork located just below the bridge over the [REDACTED] that fronts on Flathead Lake and is approximately 50 meters from the Highway. We bought the lot in 1973 and at that time we still lived and worked in Missoula. Over the intervening years we have traveled both Highways on both sides of the Lake many times, though we usually travel the East shore. Since 2003 we have spent 6 months each year at Bigfork and consider it our home.

We recognize that trucks are necessary to maintain our way of life. However, we are appalled at the behavior of many truck drivers and their impact on our lives. They consistently exceed the speed limit, tailgate, cross the yellow line and flaunt their jake brakes. MDT is either unwilling or unable to control their behavior. We can't even walk the bridge over the Swan because MDT saw fit to place guard rails in the pedestrian lanes. Our concerns have surfaced before and will again unless something is done.

The MDT presentation at the meeting was informative. I was somewhat surprised by some of the data presented. I thought that there would be many more accidents on the East shore because of the huge difference in the designs of the two Highways. I think it would be interesting to compare the costs of the accidents on each shore. I suspect those on the East shore are more expensive to clean up.

Your experiment with a loaded truck attempting to show the relative time and fuel expended for each route was unpersuasive because it assumed that the ultimate destination of trucking is Columbia Falls. This is only true for timber related traffic and is probably not the case for other classes of trucks.

The key points that argue for some restrictions on some truck traffic on Highway 35 are the higher density of access points on the East shore that are not only more numerous, but have much shorter sight lines than those on the West because of the more modern design of that side. This modern design standard also includes wider shoulders, more gentle ditch grades, hazard reductions in the right-of-way and better curve geometry. There is just more room to maneuver and escape bad situations on the West Shore. The other point that argues for regulation is the wide difference in proximity to the Lake between the two routes. Two miles on the East shore versus nine miles on the East are within 100 yards of the Lake. This equates to approximately 5 times more likely that a fuel truck will eventually end up in the Lake

I am suggesting that you limit fuel tankers with pups, all hazardous waste cargoes and logging trucks with pups. The first two should be limited because of their obvious hazard to the Lake, and all three because they are too long to negotiate the curves on the East shore. You have the expertise and authority to regulate this traffic. You should act before some ill advised initiative is commenced to limit all truck traffic.

All accidents are tragic to someone, but some are more so as is evident from the latest fuel spill. I needn't elaborate on the economic consequences of a major spill in the Lake. Is the Department of Transportation willing to take the heat that would result from such a catastrophe? Are you willing to expose Governor Schweitzer to the resulting political storm because you had a chance to do something that you were warned about and didn't listen?

[REDACTED]

June 4, 2008

Mr. Jim Lynch  
Director  
Montana Department of Transportation  
2701 Prospect Avenue  
PO Box 201001  
Helena MT 59620-1001

**RE: Truck traffic on Highway 93 and MT 35**

Dear Director Lynch,

Please accept the following comments regarding safety and commercial truck traffic issues on MT 35 and US 93 [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] company that has been in continuous operation in the Flathead Valley since 1912. [REDACTED] heavily the use of heavy trucks to transport logs, by-product and finished [REDACTED] from and to our customers. Specifically, both US 93 and MT 35 are vital transportation routes for Stoltze between Columbia Falls and the Missoula / US 95 corridor.

As long time members of the Flathead Valley community, we share the same concerns with respect to safety and environmental contamination that have been raised in conjunction with recent accidents. As ALL types of traffic continue to increase on our road systems, the issues of road design and capacity become more critical. However, we do not feel that prohibiting or limiting use of public highways to only certain types of traffic is the answer.

It is important that we focus on the real needs of public safety and environmental protection and not be distracted by emotional and personal wants as we look towards solutions. The safety, environmental and economic impacts of any potential solutions must be carefully examined and weighed in the decision making process.


We appreciate the willingness of MDT to engage the public and commercial users of these important highways in working together to find workable and reasonable solutions to the safety and environmental issues raised. We look forward to continued involvement and will be submitting additional comments and suggestions as we move forward. Please feel free to contact us if you desire additional information or have questions about our operations and uses of these road systems.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

May 35

STAC

  
As you see, this writing concerns the  
narrow highway<sup>35</sup> between Flathead Lake and the  
giant mountains along the lake.

We must put a limit on the traffic  
along its boundry and that must be along its  
entire way.

It can be done by limiting the heavy  
trucks and tankers on a daily basis.

Yours truly,




STAX

May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2008

Mr. Kailey,

I am writing about Highway 35 safety issues. For years we have been concerned about truck accidents on this area. There is no shoulder on this road. Several chip trucks have turned over, but gasoline spills are a different matter.

How sorry I am for those people who have been evacuated. It could happen to us!

Please do not allow the transportation of hazardous materials on Highway 35! I live on Skidder Lane all summer, and I am concerned about the purity of this lake.

STACK

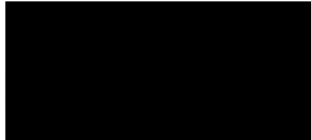
REGARDING all of the STATIC concerning the truck traffic on highway 35 and the fact that the HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT has done its job in this respect is what is wrong AP ALL.

THE one thing that has built up on this highway is the BRUSH along the SCRIBER'S, also the SCRIBER'S have been built up from layer after layer of REPAIRING over the years to where you have quite a drop off on some PORTIONS of this roadway.

WHERE are the HIGHWAY PATROL'S on this road, very seldom do you see any out there. OF all the roads in Montana I have encountered more drivers in CARS passing on hills, crest of hills--curves --NO PASSING ZONES--going in speeds up to 70 miles and hour then any other road in MONTANA.

NOTED any type of vehicle has to be maintained and drivers have to be trained, and this is where there is quite a gape -- the downfall is that *There* is not enough ENCL. in Montana these drivers who pull these combinations of heavy loads and trailers, REGARDLESS if that COMBINATION consists of a semi pulling a BLK or truck pulling a TRAILER behind a PICK-UP.

HAVING driven these combinations for the last thirty years or better and highway 35 countless times without ~~anything~~ LAYING one over I must be doing something right after all. JUST PAY ATTENTION REGARDLESS OF WHAT HIGHWAY YOU ARE DRIVING. IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE -- THERE ARE WORSE HIGHWAYS IN MONTANA THEN HIGHWAY 35 TRUST ME.



ALL COPY OF REPT

2000 JUN -2 4H10:12

MISSOULA

AT 2500 OF 142  
2008 JUL -7 AM 10:17  
MISSOULA

Sir Duane Bailey

I pay a lot of Taxes to drive on the  
highways - byways of this great State  
ya I'm a long time Montanarian all my life.  
I own my own truck, and I know that  
having to use 93 would cost a lot more  
in time and fuel.

I have not seen or heard how many  
SAFE miles us Trucks rack up in  
a year but I'll bet it's a lot.

Some of the folks that live up there  
on Hwy 35. could do a lot better themselves  
at being better drivers.

So don't shut down a road I pay  
taxes to use.

[REDACTED]

Montana

[REDACTED]

PS

Over all it (35) is one of the safest  
roads I travel on.



2 July 2008

Dwane Kailey, District Administrator  
Montana Department of Transportation  
PO Box 7039  
Missoula, MT 59807-7039

Re: MT Highway 35

Dear Mr. Kailey,

I live on the East Shore of Flathead Lake all year and drive Highway 35 both in the summer and winter, during the day and at night. It is a beautiful, scenic road but also a very dangerous one. It has too many curves, too many blind entrances, too many deer and is just too narrow with no shoulder in most places. It is just too easy to slip over the edge as is evidenced by the tanker accident in April. Sometimes in the winter and at night it is very hard to even see the edge when the road is snow covered.

I would like to recommend that Montana DOT restrict the use of tandem or double trailer trucks. I believe that they are called pup trailers. I would also like to see the speed limit enforced or maybe even lowered.

I don't want to restrict all truck traffic or even hazardous material trucks. I like to receive my propane and other deliveries and be able to occasionally log or clear my property.

I would also like to see the highway widened and/or guard rails all along the edge including the mountain side. I realize that this is probably not feasible but eliminating tandem or double trailer trucks would go a long way in improving the safety of the road and protecting our beautiful lake.

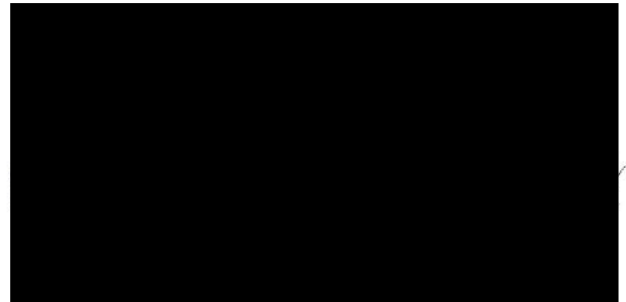
Sincerely yours,

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the sender.

We request that the Montana Department of Transportation complete all necessary steps to remove the risks to human safety, and property damage and environmental degradation in connection with large truck use of Highway 35, soon.

Thank you for your involvement and making this communication part of the public record.

Sincerely,



May 27, 2008

Department of Transportation

P. O. Box 7039

Missoula, MT 59807-7039

Attention: Dwane Kailey, District Administrator

RE: Highway 35 safety issue.

Last week, I made the round trip from Missoula to Whitefish and back. Going up the East Shore (35) I met 16 commercial tractor/trailer rigs between Polson and Bigfork. I was followed by a tanker with a pup the whole way and overtook another just outside of Bigfork. Of the 18 vehicles, 1 in 3 was an oil tanker with a pup. The truck traffic on the return trip was less than half that many vehicles.

The trucking industry has obviously declared that the Hwy 35 orchard area, with houses close to the road and no shoulders, is a commercial corridor. They argue that the grade is easier than on Hwy 93. That was obviously considered a trade-off, since it would be difficult to provide the same treatment to Hwy 35. The recent accidents on that road were entirely predictable and Montana chose to ignore the danger. It is not too late to prevent further problems in this fragile area! Please say "NO" to trucks on Hwy 35.

Sincerely yours,





# Comment form

Safety Public Meetings

Meeting date and time: June 5, 2008; 6:30 - 9:00 pm

Location: BW Kwataqnuq Resort, Polson, MT

You are invited to make your comments on this form and leave it with the meeting officials or take it with you and mail it to Dwane Kailey, Missoula District Administrator, MDT Missoula district office, at PO Box 7039, Missoula, MT 59807-7039.. Comments may also be submitted by fax to (406) 494-4396 or online at

[www.mdt.mt.gov/mdt/comment\\_form.shtml](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/mdt/comment_form.shtml).

Please indicate your name, address and affiliation (if any) below. Thank you for your interest in and comments about this project. Please use the back and/or additional sheets of paper if necessary.

Comments: The meeting at Kwataqnuq was well organized and well attended but it did not represent the views of people on Highway 93. I only heard about the meeting from a transport company out of Kalispell two days prior.

My comment is that if the M.D.T. chooses to divert truck traffic from Highway 35 to Highway 93, this will only be shifting the problem. Given a year or two later we will only be assembling at another meeting from a new "Highway 93 Committee" wondering why the stressed Transport conditions have not been partially diverted back to Highway 35.

Shifting traffic back and forth is not the answer.

There were good comments on imposing safer driving standards for all vehicles using Highway 35. I commend Hanson Trucking for their Leadership in safety.

JUN-18-2008 08:53

STACK

June, 2008

Dwayne Kailey  
Missoula District Administrator  
MDT

[REDACTED]

This is a comment related to restricting use by certain vehicles (trucks) of Hwy 35 on the east side of Flathead Lake in Lake & Flathead Counties.

My opinion is that truckers pay for the use of public highways so they should be allowed to use them. I do not agree that trucks should be prohibited from using Hwy 35.

[REDACTED]

May 27, 2008

Mr. Duane Kailey  
District Administrator  
Montana Dept. of Transportation  
P.O. Box 7039  
Missoula, MT 59807-7039

2008 MAY 29 10:10:00  
MISSOULA

Dear Mr. Kailey:

We write to you as concerned citizens and owners of a home near Polson which is accessed from Highway 35 along the east shore of Flathead Lake. The vast majority of trucks using highways on the perimeter of Flathead Lake are going to and from the population centers along Highway 93 (Whitefish, Kalispell, several communities along the west shore, Polson, Ronan, St. Ignatius, Arlee, and Missoula). Nonetheless, starting at the junction of Highway 35 and Highway 93 in Polson and concluding at the junction of Highway 82 and Highway 93 (immediately north of Somers), many of these trucks use Highway 35 along the east shore of Flathead Lake, rather than Highway 93.

The trucking industry apparently claims that use of Highway 35 achieves greater fuel efficiency than using Highway 93. At best this claim is unproven, and reasonable analysis suggests it is probably untrue. Using Highway 93, the distance from Polson to the junction of Highway 82 and Highway 93 north of Somers is 43.4 miles and the estimated travel time at the speed limit (mostly 65 miles per hour) is 44 minutes. Using Highway 35, the distance from Polson to the junction of Highway 82 and Highway 93 is nearly identical (43.45 miles), but, travelling at the posted speed limits (usually 50 miles per hour), the estimated travel time is 63 minutes. These distances and times are confirmed on the enclosed map and analysis from MapQuest. Obviously fuel savings achieved from avoiding the several grades along the west shore of Flathead is almost certainly lost in the 19 minutes of additional travel time required to use Highway 35. Thus, the claim of "fuel savings" by using Highway 35 seems questionable, and actual savings, if any, are likely to be minimal.

Further, considerations of fuel savings are dwarfed by the obvious safety concerns. Along the west shore Highway 93 has been recently widened, improved and given passing lanes and broad, sloping shoulders to accommodate the demands of modern truck traffic. No such improvements have been made to Highway 35, which remains a "country" highway, far narrower than Highway 93, with steep, narrow shoulders, and precipitous drop-offs in many locations.



Also, on a per mile basis, Highway 35 between Polson and Big Fork has many more side road and driveway accesses than Highway 93 between Polson and Somers. Many of these accesses are "blind" and, unlike Highway 93, have never been designed to permit safe approaches onto the Highway.

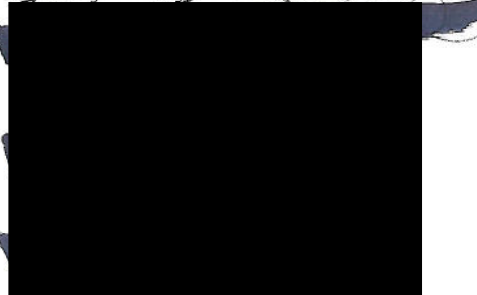
Many other safety considerations come to mind. Certainly the proximity of Highway 35 to the lake increases the likelihood that another tanker spill could jeopardize the lake. Likewise, along Highway 35 many homes to the west of the Highway are in close proximity to and immediately below the Highway. This configuration greatly increases the chance that a truck leaving the road will damage the homes and perhaps injure or kill the occupants.

Let's face it, Highway 93 is designed for trucks, Highway 35 is not. One of the significant arguments for spending taxpayer money to widen and modernize Highway 93 along the west shore was that it would remove truck traffic from Highway 35. In support of this rationale, it was argued that continuing to permit truck traffic along Highway 35 was dangerous. Nothing has changed. Truck traffic along Highway 35 remains dangerous. It is up to the Highway Department to assure that one of the primary goals of changes and improvements to Highway 93 is met.

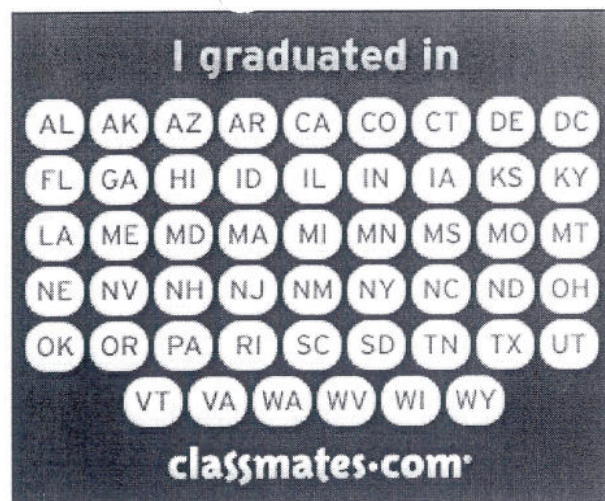
Trucks needing to serve Big Fork can use Highway 82. The need for occasional trucks to use Highway 35 for local purposes (such as during active logging operations or during the cherry harvest) can be addressed by use of a temporary permit system.

The concerns of the trucking industry are a valid consideration. However, our highways should be managed for the benefit and safety of all Montana citizens, and not simply for the convenience of the trucking industry. Trucks currently have a modern and safe route along the west shore which is exactly the same distance as the east shore route and for which the driving time is significantly less. In this circumstance, the safety of other citizens and residents using Highway 35 should prevail. Please restrict truck use on Highway 35 to local use only. Thank you.





Very Truly Yours,



# MAPQUEST










## A: Polson, MT

- |   |   |         |
|---|---|---------|
|  | 1: Start out going WEST on 3RD AVE E toward MAIN ST/MT-354. | 0.1 mi  |
|  | 2: Turn RIGHT onto MAIN ST/MT-354.                          | 0.1 mi  |
|  | 3: Turn LEFT onto US-93.                                    | 43.3 mi |
|  | 4: End at Mt Highway 82 & Us Highway 93 Somers, MT 59932    |         |




Estimated Time: 44 minutes      Estimated Distance: 43.40 miles

## B: Mt Highway 82 & Us Highway 93, Somers, MT 59932

- |   |  |        |
|---|--|--------|
|  | 1: Start out going SOUTHEAST on US-93 toward FOREST HILL RD. | 0.0 mi |
|  | 2: Turn LEFT onto MT-82.                                     | 6.9 mi |
|  | 3: Turn RIGHT onto MT-35.                                    | 2.6 mi |
|  | 4: Turn SHARP LEFT onto GRAND AVE.                           | 0.1 mi |
|  | 5: Turn RIGHT onto GRAND DR.                                 | 0.5 mi |
|  | 6: Turn LEFT onto CASCADE AVE.                               | 0.0 mi |
|  | 7: End at Bigfork, MT  |        |

Estimated Time: 13 minutes      Estimated Distance: 10.09 miles

## C: Bigfork, MT

- |   |  |        |
|---|--|--------|
|  | 1: Start out going SOUTH on CASCADE AVE toward GRAND DR. | 0.0 mi |
|  | 2: Turn RIGHT onto GRAND DR.                             | 0.1 mi |
|  | 3: Turn LEFT onto ELECTRIC AVE.                          | 0.1 mi |



4: Turn SLIGHT LEFT onto BRIDGE ST.

0.0 mi



5: Turn RIGHT to stay on BRIDGE ST.

0.3 mi



6: Go STRAIGHT.

0.1 mi



7: Turn LEFT onto MT-35.

30.8 mi



8: Turn RIGHT onto US-93/LAKE ST. Continue to follow US-93.

1.9 mi



9: Turn LEFT onto 1ST ST E.

0.1 mi



10: Turn RIGHT onto 3RD AVE E.

0.0 mi



11: End at Polson, MT

Estimated Time: 50 minutes

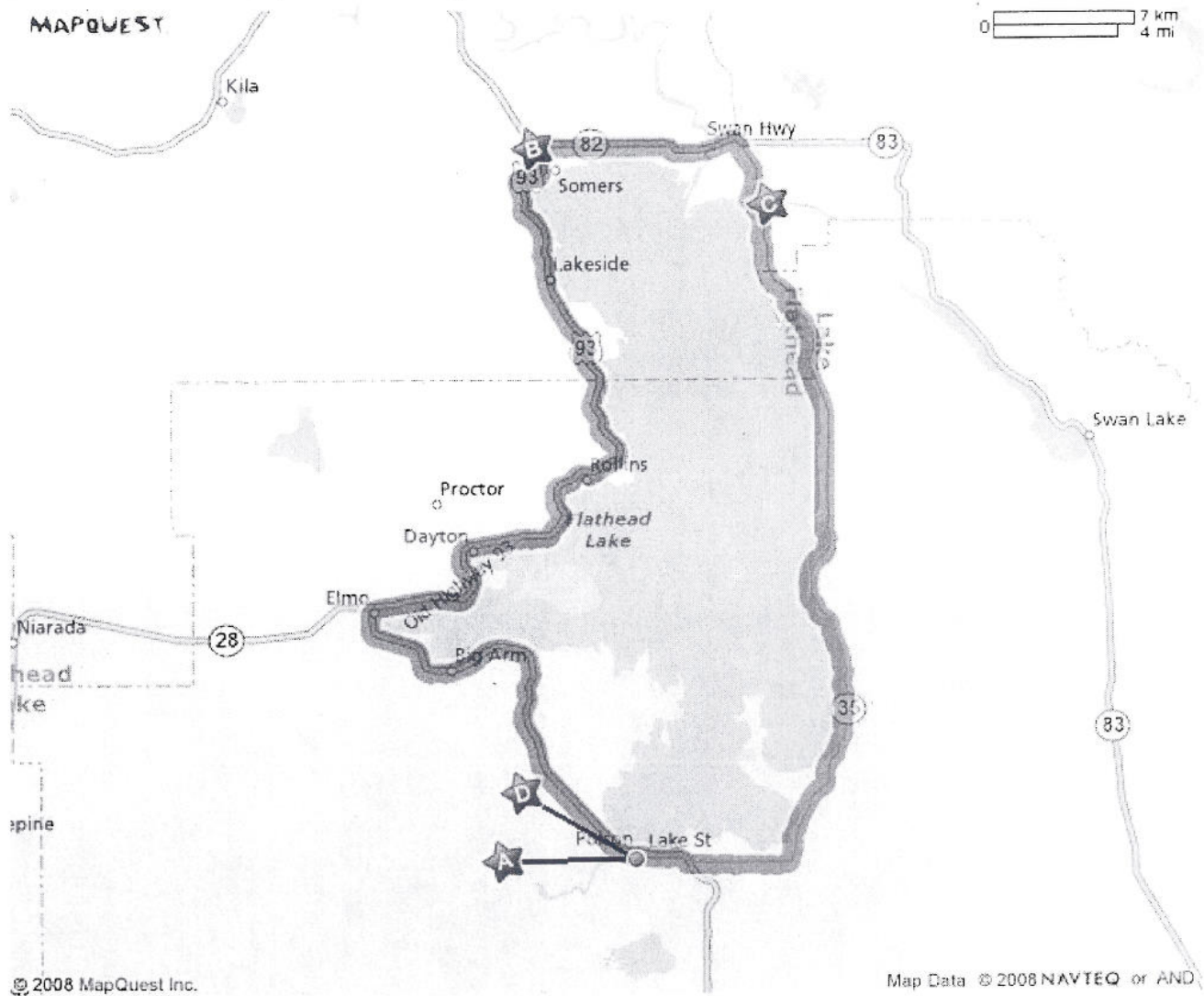
Estimated Distance: 33.36 miles

D: Polson, MT

Total Time: 1 hour 47 minutes

Total Distance: 86.85 miles





Directions and maps are informational only. We make no warranties on the accuracy of their content, road conditions or route usability or expeditiousness. You assume all risk of use. MapQuest and its suppliers shall not be liable to you for any loss or delay resulting from your use of MapQuest. Your use of MapQuest means you agree to our [Terms of Use](#)



# Comment form

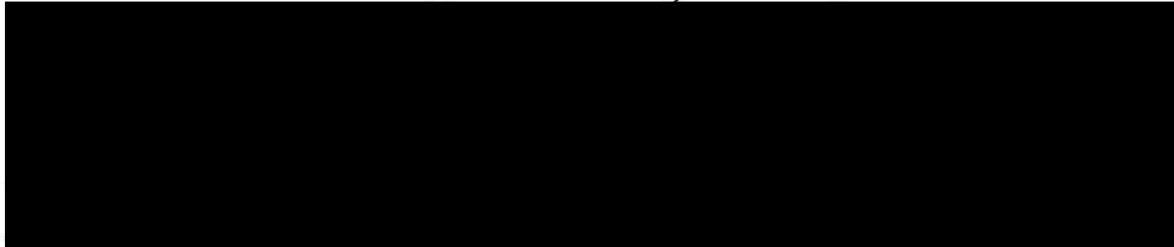
Safety Public Meetings

Meeting date and time: June 5, 2008; 6:30 – 9:00 pm

Location: BW Kwataqnuq Resort, Polson, MT

You are invited to make your comments on this form and leave it with the meeting officials or take it with you and mail it to Dwane Kailey, Missoula District Administrator, MDT Missoula district office, at PO Box 7039, Missoula, MT 59807-7039.. Comments may also be submitted by fax to (406) 494-4396 or online at

Please indicate your name, address and affiliation (if any) below. Thank you for your interest in and comments about this project. Please use the back and/or additional sheets of paper if necessary.



Comments:

We attended the 'Hwy35' meeting in Polson. Good job done on gathering facts! and presentation!

However, I must re-emphasize the fact Hwy 35 was built for the vehicles of the 30's + 40's. — a different era of vehicle design. Improvements to the design of the road have been meager since then.

To realize how dangerous this road is, one only has to note the crosses along the highway — especially on every curve.

Thank you



Comments on #35  
June 6, 2008  
page 3

3. Eliminate truck-trailer-pup combinations on all of #35. I have followed the fuel carriers to Polson and back to my home at mile marker 9.5, and the pups "wander". With no or very limited shoulders, there is no correction when the pup wheels slip over the fog line, because they are literally in the ditch in most places.

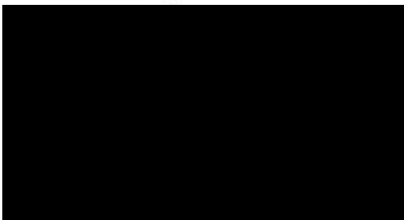
4. Consistency of restricted speed areas. Now there are 30mph, 45 mph, and 50 mph areas on #35 that I know of—perhaps some areas of 25mph. The problem is that it is confusing to have different speed restrictions in different areas. If people knew that when they got onto #35 at Polson, that there were restricted areas of 35mph only as to the general speed of 50, it would be less confusing and easier to conform to those restrictions.

While the truckers will argue that they will use more fuel than at 50mph because of the hill at the Bowman's Orchard area, and a general argument that the trucks aren't "geared" to run efficiently at that speed, they will not lose as much as if they were diverted to #93.

I appreciate the chipper trucks in the winter, because they keep the road open----no disrespect to the highway department--- but the constant travel keeps the tracks bare until the plows can get there. I do not appreciate excessive speed that interferes with lawful use of the roadway. Another problem is the lack of shoulders on #35.

In closing, we have a confrontation between a growing recreation-retirement population of road users and an economic demand for truckers to minimize their expenses. We have declining logging operations in Western Montana, and at \$5.00 diesel, the six-gallon fuel consumption on one way trip adds up to the entire industry----although I would suspect that the new highway #93 from Polson to Missoula should decrease fuel consumption in that area, which would mitigate the overall consumption of fuel. I don't know if the department has any data on that issue that would pre-date the construction approximately 3 years ago in comparison to today, but it would be interesting.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment, and I hope that someone actually reads this letter.







2008 MAY 26 AM 10:14  
MISSOULA

May 27, 2008

Montana Department of Transportation  
Dwane Kailey, District Administrator  
P. O. Box 7039  
Missoula, MT 59807-7039

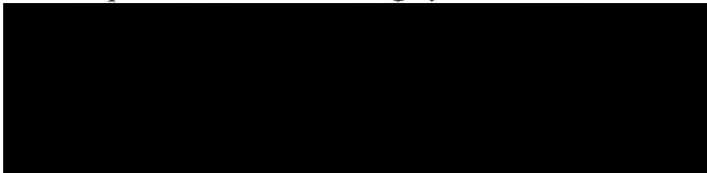
RE: Highway 35 Safety Issues

We live along Highway 35. The highway is narrow with no shoulders and many curves as it winds its way among the cherry orchards and homes between Flathead Lake and the towering Mission Mountains. This highway, which was carved out along the edge of the mountains, provides a perfect slow paced scenic route around the east side of Flathead Lake between Polson and Bigfork. The southern portion of this area of Highway 35 is on the Flathead Indian Reservation, where, under the protection of our United States government, wildlife is protected and the land is respected and preserved. During the summer time cherry stands, state parks, and recreational activities flourish. This section of highway 35 allows access to all these places. There are boat ramps, fishing spots, cabins, and places for both locals and tourists to enjoy the beautiful sights and sounds of western Montana.


We live here to breath in the clean air, look at the fantastic scenery, and listen to the sounds of the birds and wildlife. In reality, we seldom can hear each other talk outdoors, much less listen to the birds. This section of Highway 35 has become like the track of an endless freight train, congested with vehicles and traffic noises. Many of the vehicles are long, noisy, heavy semi trucks. Some have extra trailers which make them even longer. Frankly, this particular portion of Highway 35 was not built to support this kind of traffic. Fortunately, in this location, a nice wide highway runs parallel to Highway 35. Highway 93 has wide shoulders, fewer curves, and contains passing lanes on hills. It can support heavy through commercial truck traffic safely.

The recent accidents involving semi trucks on Highway 35 adversely altered the lives of many families that were affected by the gas spill and contaminated our pristine land and waters. Fortunately no lives have been lost so far. The accidents also called attention to the problems caused by commercial trucks attempting to navigate this narrow scenic highway. The potential for danger will continue if the status quo remains.

All through commercial trucks should be prohibited between Polson and Bigfork. These trucks can use Highway 93 instead. The only commercial trucks that should be allowed to use Highway 35 between Polson and Bigfork are those who really have legitimate business stops along this section of highway. This is our recommendation to the Montana Department of Transportation. We encourage you to make a decision with safety your priority.



STACE



June 2, 2008

Dwane Kailey, District Administrator  
P. O. Box 7039  
Missoula, MT 59807-7039

RE: Highway 35

We know that you are currently studying the safety issues on Highway 35 and we would like to take this opportunity to express our concerns regarding the speed limits. We live along Highway 35, between mile marker 1 and 2. It is our opinion that Highway 35 should be posted at a **maximum speed limit of 45 mph** between Polson and Bigfork.

The speed limit between the traffic light near mile .5 and mile marker 3 is of particular concern to us. Highway 35 currently starts with a speed limit of 40 mph. At the first traffic light, at about mile .5, the speed limit raises from 40 to 50 mph. This is too fast considering all the traffic moving to and from all of the commercial business located along the highway between miles .5 to mile 1. Between mile marker 1 and mile marker 3, the speed is posted at 60 mph. **This is far too fast for this particular stretch of highway!** A big hill is located in the middle of this section and there is no center turn lane. This is where we personally put our lives on the line. We watch the crest of the hill when we need to access the highway heading west for any sign of a vehicle before we attempt to pull out. Even then, by the time we are on the highway, a vehicle traveling at 60 mph can be right upon us. The big semi trucks with extra trailers driving at 60 mph just add to the danger. Vehicles from several subdivisions and businesses need to access the highway in this 60 mph zone.

You may not even be aware of this, but a new large school facility is being built just east of the crest of the hill near mile marker 2. This fall students will be entering and exiting Highway 35 to attend the Mission Valley Christian Academy. If you continue to keep the speed limit here at 60 mph at the crest of this hill, accidents will happen. The lives of these children and their families are at risk. The speed limit here needs to be reduced immediately. Do not put this matter off until it is too late and someone is killed.

At mile marker 3 the speed is reduced to 50 mph, just before the 90 degree Fulkerson corner which is advised at 45 mph. wouldn't it make more sense to post the speed at 45 mph and keep it at 45 mph all the way? Sometimes speed limit determinations are made looking at a map rather than driving it to see the topography and where access roads are located. If you take the time to drive this section of highway 35 you will see that a maximum 45 mph speed limit makes much more sense than 60 mph. Please give this your serious consideration.

